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Poetical.

If We Knew.

BY RUTH BENTON.

If we knew the cares and crosses
Crowding round our neighbor's way,
If we knew the little losses,
Sorely grievous, day by day,
Would we then so often chide him
For his lack of thrift and gain—
Leaving on his heart a shadow,
Leaving on our lives a stain?

If we knew the clouds above us,
Held by gentle blessings there,
Would we turn away all trembling,
In our blind and weak despair?
Would we shrink from little shadows,
Lying on the dewy grass,
While 'tis only birds of Eden,
Just in mercy flying past?

If we knew the silent story,
Quivering through the heart of pain,
Would our womanhood dare doom them
Back to haunts of guilt again?
Life hath many a tangled crossing;
Joy hath many a break of woe;
And the cheeks, tear washed, are whitest;
This the blessed angels know.

Let us reach in our bosoms
For the key to other lives,
And with love toward erring nature,
Cherish good that still survives,
So that when our disrobed s irits
Soar to realms of light again,
We may say, dear Father, judge us
As we judged our fellow-men.

Miscellaneous.

Japanese Industry.

The Japanese are an industrious and ingenious people. Nearly all the useful metals are worked by them with great skill, especially iron, copper, gold, and silver; and they possess an art in the combination of metals for beauty and effect unknown to other people. Their sword blades are admirable. They also manufacture astronomical instruments, and clocks and watches, which are copied after European models, probably introduced by the Dutch. Their mirrors are metalic and beautiful. Their carpenters and cabinet makers' tools are also equal to any of European manufacture. They are said to be very quick in observing any improvement, introduced by foreigners, make themselves masters of it, and copy it with skill and exactness. Their coinage is well stamped, as they are good die sinkers. In wood, no people work better, and in lacquering they excel the world. Other nations have attempted, in vain, to imitate and equal them, owing chiefly to the material necessary in preparing the wood, which is the gum of a tree known only to themselves, called the varnish tree. Occasionally specimens of their lacquer work, through the Dutch residents of Dezima, have found their way to this country; but it is said the best samples are never sent out of the kingdom. They manufacture glass, both colored and uncolored, and their porcelain is both delicate and beautiful beyond all rivalry. Paper they produce in abundance, and principally from the bark of the mulberry tree. It is of different qualities, and some of it is as soft and flexible as our cotton cloth, for which it might be mistaken and is used for handkerchiefs and other domestic wants.

They make silk, the best of which is superior to that of China, and is said to be woven by criminals of high rank, who are upon a small, unproductive island, deprived of their property, and made to support themselves by their labor. The exportation of these silks, it is said, is prohibited. As a substitute for cotton cloths, as before remarked, in the manufacture of which they have little skill, they use their coarse, spongy paper, which is quite as useful and durable. As they have no sheep or goats, the manufacture of woolens is unknown among them. Very little leather is produced in Japan, owing to the Buddhist superstition referred to in a former article, which makes these manufacturing or vending it outcasts from the rest of the population. It is never used for shoes or other coverings for the feet, such being made from plaited straw, for the lower classes; the nobility and dignitaries wear slippers made of fine rattan slips, neatly plaited. The ragged appearance of their feet frequently affords a ridiculous contrast to the splendor and richness of the other portions of their picturesque costume.

We have alluded to the ingenuity of the Japanese: take the following as an example in clock making. It is the account of one given by a former Governor (Dutch) of Dezima, a small island appropriated to the Dutch Company, and to which they are exclusively confined:

"The clock is contained in a frame three feet high, by five feet long, and presents a fair landscape at noontime. Plum and cherry trees in full blossom, with other plants, adorn the foreground. The background consists of a hill, from which falls a cascade, skillfully imitated in glass, that forms a softly flowing river, first winding around rocks placed here and there, then running across the middle of the landscape till lost in a wood of fir trees. A golden sun hangs aloft in the sky, and turning upon a point, indicates the striking of the hours. On the frame below, the twelve hours of the day and night are marked, where a slowly creeping tortoise serves as a hand. A bird, perched upon the branch of a plum tree, by its song and the clapping of its wings, announces the moment when the hour expires, and as the song ceases a bell is made to strike the hour, during which operation a mouse comes out of a grotto and runs over the hill."—*New York Express.*

From the Western Reserve Chronicle.

Overcome Evil with Good.

BY FRANCES D. GAGE.

"Mother! mother!" screamed little Susy Read as she came bounding home from school, one sultry July evening. "Joe has run away from school again, never was there one class after recess, and Mr. Moggs said I must tell you as soon as I came home."

"Oh dear; what shall I do with that child!" sighed Mrs. Read, as she motioned with one hand to little Susy to soften her voice lest she should waken the baby. "He is going to be ruined unless a stop can be put to this running away. I think there never was such a set of boys, as those Place boys. They don't go to school, have nothing to do, and so make mischief for all the smaller boys in town. But an end must be put to this playing truant at some rate."

The weary mother of six little children got up carefully and laid the sleeping rose-bud upon her breast into its tiny cradle, with loving hand, and hushed it to slumber again by a loud lullaby, while the troubled face told how sad were her thoughts over her truant boy.

Joe did not come home till the sun was down and then crept up a back stairway and his mother found him in bed and fast asleep, when with her night lamp, she sought his chamber before retiring, to see if all was well.

Oh! there is never a time when the mother's heart rests so quietly in her bosom, when it throbs with so steady a beat, as when she takes her walk of love around her home before she herself "lays down to pleasant dreams," and looking in the faces of her little ones finds written upon each, health and happiness. Joe was a beautiful boy of seven, full of energy and life; full of ambition and power. Not a boy at school could out run him in a foot-race, or wrestle him down upon the play ground. He was always first best in his class, and no boy in all the school was so loved as Joe Read.

His hair was of brilliant auburn, his skin bright and fair, and his features classically chiseled, and as he lay there fast asleep upon his pillow, freshly washed from the clear running stream, his bright locks newly dried with his pocket comb, and turned in shining folds to one side, his mother thought she had never seen her darling more lovely.

"Could it be," she asked herself, "that there was any maliciousness in the heart of her child, that made him so disobedient to her commands, so restive under the iron discipline of Mr. Moggs."

She held her light near his fair brow, he moved, his eyes quivered, he threw up his arms as if breasting the silver waves, while a wile laugh of delight broke the silence of the chamber and then deep breathing and death like stillness told the waiting mother that her darling slept the sleep of innocence and joy. Stooping she left a kiss upon his brow and with soft step withdrew, whispering to her own heart, "he is not bad, let the school-master say what he will."

The next morning, when the school-bell rang, Mrs. Read was somewhat worried; the half dozen little ones had made their demands all at once; the baby had kept her awake: she was nervous and weak. But Susy, who was a year or two older, insisted that Joe must be charged to do his duty before he left.

"Now, Joseph," said Mrs. Read, as she was hurrying to get the bread worked over (before it soured.) and made ready for the oven, "mind what I say to you—if you go from school this afternoon and go into the river, I shall whip you with a stick; I don't like to do it, but I shall have to; remember."

The vigorous work she was doing, added no doubt to the vigor of the command, and Joe departed without saying a word, feeling that his dear mother was angry and he resolved in his own mind he would not transgress.

The day was very hot, and the school-room, like most country school houses, seemed built to torture the children. It stood on an elevation from which the grand old forest had all been removed, to give it place, leaving not one shrub or vine to break the sun's scorching rays, or delight the weary eye.

The busy feet of many players had trod out every root of green around the door, and through the sultry July weeks the sun poured down his heat till the walls of the school almost baked the little victims within.—Hard, stiff forms for the little pliant bodies did their work for seven hours in the day, for Mr. Moggs said he could not get through in six hours, the children were so bad, and took up so much of his time.

He believed with Solomon, "that to spare the rod would spoil the child." The conduct of Rehoboam never for a moment reminding him that his son was a practical illustration of the failure of his father's theories. The more hot, tired and uncomfortable the children became, the more assiduously Mr. Moggs flourished his rattan, the more he scolded, of course the more turbulent and uneasy grew the "innocents."

Joe could not stand it; the clear sparkling waters were a temptation not to be resisted, especially that deep shaded pool under the hanging elm, where clinging to the limbs he could plunge down into the cool depths and wake up the fishes who gathered there for quiet and shelter from the burning heat. Joe was missing after recess, missing at tea, missing when the rest gathered with their mother on the door-stone at twilight, to hear her tell her pleasant stories and teach them the names of the stars, and tell of the love and goodness of God. Mrs. Read's heart was smitten when little Susy whispered,

"Mother, Joe has just gone up the back stairs to bed, and hain't had no supper neither."

It was that promise to "whip him with a stick" that sent that thrill of pain to its core.

But she had promised and she must perform; so quietly withdrawing from the group, she broke from a peach tree near, a long, slender switch, and slowly and with saddened face ascended the stairs and entered the room of the culprit.

"Do you remember, Joseph," she said solemnly, "what I told you this morning."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Now what shall I do? I must either whip you or be guilty of making a promise and breaking it. Which do you think I ought to do?"

"Do as you said," answered Joe mournfully.

The whipping was accordingly given, while tears streamed down the face of the executioner.

Joe uttered no cry, but every look told how much he felt this castigation which was so severely laid on his lower limbs, made all the more tender by long exposure in the water.

Mrs. Read felt that it was not her duty to flinch now, as he seemed determined to brave it out.

When her work was finished, she asked him to promise her not to run away and go in swimming again.

"I don't know, mother, as if I will or not. I'll try not!"

The simple child answer, the half suppressed sob, the flooding blue eye, did their work; the mother's heart was too full for another word; she retreated leaving Joe to his reflections, and no doubt his smarts were all soothed, and he asleep, long before his mother had decided whether she had "overcome evil with good."

At breakfast an older brother asked his mother what she thought Joe had said about the last night's whipping.

"I don't know," said Mrs. Read, "I am sure; but I do know he did not care half as much about the whipping as I did; it did not hurt him as much; but what does he say?"

"Why he says he has been thinking all about that, and has concluded he would rather take two such whippings every day and go in swimming, than to have to stay in that hot school house all day and hear old Moggs scold and not have any whipping or swimming either, so you may go ahead with your whipping, and he'll go ahead with his swimming."

Joe had reasoned correctly, if whipping paid the penalty, and he was ready to take it, it canceled all obligation.

No punishment, as punishment can atone for wrong done, and unless severe enough to prevent its recurrence, it becomes simply vindictive.

Mrs. Read felt sorely troubled. What should she do next? What would she have asked of her own dear mother, now gone to the home of the blest? What most moved her own childish spirit to obedience in the days gone by! Love, love; only love and tenderness. She stepped into her parlor alone after breakfast, and called Joe, as he was busily gathering up his books for school. He stood before her with a half defiant, half jolly air, as if he expected to be told again, "if you run away you shall be whipped with a stick." Already was his young heart beginning to be hardened by the endeavor to overcome evil with evil.

So he was greatly disappointed when his mother drew him to her, and putting her arm around him, smoothed back his beautiful hair, while she said quietly, "do you love me Joseph!"

"Why yes, mother, what makes you ask me that?"

"Because I think if my little boy loved me, he would not wish to make me feel so badly as I did last night."

"I knew you felt bad, mother, for I saw the tears falling down your face and I hated that worse than the whipping, a heap."

"Well Joseph, I will tell you what I am going to do. You say you love me, and I know you do. It was because I loved you that it made me weep to punish you last night. If you love me as well as I do you, you will not make me feel so sadly again I think. I shall not whip you again. Now go to school—if you think you will feel better and happier to go in swimming and play truant than to be good and make mother happy and have the consciousness that you are doing right—go in swimming. I leave you to your own honor and kindness; you already know all the reasons I can give you why you should not do so."

"Good morning, my son, may you have strength to do as you know you ought."

The tears were swimming in his eyes and his heart was ready to burst. He kissed his mother's offered lip and bounded away to his school. Noon passed and no word was said. But when the evening hour came, the first bounding step upon the door stone was Joe's.

"Here I am, mother" he cried, "the boys all teased me to go swimming, but I didn't want to make you feel bad. I wouldn't go; I ain't a going to any more till you tell me I may."

Again she drew him to her and thanked him from her heart for his resolution and good intention, and he bounded away to his play, happy and strong; and from that day to the present, though he is a stalwart man, no act of disobedience has ever wrung the heart of his mother.

"Evil was overcome by good," and love proved a mightier power than fear or pain.

The Atmosphere at Home.

"There's a vast difference in the atmosphere of homes," remarked a friend to me a few days since.

"Yes, indeed," said I; and memory brought to view a grand and stately city home, fair in its architectural proportions 'as a poet's dream,' and superbly adorned with all that taste could suggest and wealth supply. Truly, this is a place where happiness must love to linger, if splendor has any power to attract it. But we shall see.

As you ascend the broad steps a chill creeps slowly over the heart, that you can't but hope an inner view will dispel. Yet as you traverse lofty, richly-decorated rooms, the feeling increases in spite of you. The subdued light seems gloomy. Can it be, that amidst this rare collection of the beautiful, comfort has been forgotten? But still you wander on, hoping to find the cosy spot where the Lares and Penates of the household cluster. A quiet place adorned with

Pictures, and busts, and books, and flowers,
And a light hearth where one may sit for hours,
And feel the minutes in their rapid flight,
Yet never think to count them as they go,
The mind in converse sweet beguiled so.

Alas! 'tis a vain search; 'tis as cold as the marble slabs that adorn it. There's a conservatory graced with the rarest of plants, and birds carol there amid its fragrant blossoms, and waters splash in the tiny fountain; but it's all show, and affords no pleasure to possessors; indeed, they know but little enjoyment. The husband, wholly absorbed through the day in business, returns home weary and harrassed with care, and vents his ill humor upon those whom he is bound to love and cherish; while the wife and daughters are rendered too irritable and restless, by a round of gayety and dissipation, to ever settle down to quiet home pleasures. So there is constant bickering and contention, and hearts ache sadly beneath velvets and jewels; but smiles have marked grief laden hearts this many a year; so what does it matter if people only fancy them happy? There's no family altar there, no sweet incense arising from grateful hearts to the Giver of every good gift; living for the world is the aim of their existence.

But now step from the shadow of this gorgeous home. I know you have a feeling of relief to be once more in the open and sunny street thanking a kind Providence that your lot has not been cast there. Then come with me once more—this time away from the noisy bustling streets of the crowded city, to an humble home, nestled in among green hills and gay pastures, dotted over with nodding daisies and buttercups. There is something in the very air of the place that attracts you; it wears that cheerful face that does the heart good; sunshine seems to linger lovingly in every fold of the curtains, and dances and frolics upon the wall in very gladness; there is odor without stiffness, the beautiful and useful are combined in a way that is easier seen and felt than described.

The furnishing, evidently, was not the work of an upholster. There are pictures upon the wall, easy chairs, and lounges, all home-made, while true feminine taste and ingenuity are displayed everywhere. These are the little adornments that serve to make any place seem homelike. But there's nothing there too good to use. Happy children trip over the neat carpets and climb the cushioned chairs unchecked; and when the welcome sound of "Pap is coming," rings through the house, there's the swift patter of little feet, and merry sound of laughter as they rush to meet him and make ready the slippers and the easy-chair. Here the husband is strengthened for another day's toil, and the mother nerved for her daily round of duties, by the blessed consciousness of making others happy. And when the dark days come, as they come to all, there's something to meet the strain besides the flimsy vanities of life. There's a strong arm upon which to lean, and a trust in a Heavenly Father's guidance, knowing that he leadeth us in a way that we know not.

Thus one sunshiny heart will diffuse its brightness through a whole home, making the loneliest spot pleasant, and the homeliest dear. Then envy not the rich, you that have humble homes, and are sometimes weary, and long for recreation and some of the luxuries that others enjoy; remember that "elegant leisure" is often but another name for "splendid misery." "Content ment, with godliness, is great gain."

☞A few days since, in a Western court, the following incident took place. The lawyers inside the bar were very noisy, holding loud conversation, so that the evidence of witnesses could scarcely be heard. The deputy sheriff rapped on the desk with a knife of ponderous handle. Still the noise was unabated. After a pause he again rapped for order, but the loafers chattered on. The deputy sheriff again brought down his knife on the table with three tremendous raps, as he looked daggers at the disturbers.

"Look yer," says Colonel——, a member of the bar, rising suddenly to his feet, with remarkable gravity of countenance: "Judge, it is impossible for gentlemen to hold conversation while that person (pointing to the deputy sheriff) is allowed to make the noise he does."

This cool speech brought roars of laughter, in which, of course, the Court joined.

☞A favorite mode of introduction in Brazil is said to be—"This is my friend; if he steals anything from you I am responsible for it."

Justifying Smokers by the Scriptures.

Mr. Spurgeon was invited by a wealthy gentleman in the country, some forty miles from London, to come to the place and preach. Arriving there he found a huge tent erected in the park, with bales of hay arranged tier above tier for seats, a pile of bales for a pulpit, and three or four thousand people waiting to hear him. He preached, and the people thought they had never heard such preaching before. The service over, he retired to the gentleman's house to dine, accompanied by several ministers of his own order, and followed by hundreds of his hearers. The conversation at the table, in which the young preacher took the lead, was on the sin of needless self indulgence, and the Christian obligation of self-denial. After dinner an old minister, whose learning was rather limited, pulled out his pipe, seemed anxious to light it, but evidently somewhat embarrassed from the preceding conversation. He looked at his pipe, then at the fire, then at Mr. Spurgeon. Again he looked at Spurgeon, at the fire, at the pipe. At length he said:

"Brother Spurgeon, do you think it would be wrong for me to smoke?"

"Have you any scripture to justify the practice?" asked the preacher.

"Well, I think I have," added the venerable father in Israel.

"I shall be glad to hear what it is," rejoined Mr. Spurgeon.

"Well, brother, David was certainly a smoker."

"Ah, how do you make that out?"

"Well, he speaks, you know, in one of the psalms, of going through the valley of Bacca, (Baccy); and I make no doubt that it was a private plantation for his own private use."

Spurgeon cast a funny side-glance toward his host, and, keeping the serious half of his countenance toward the old man, replied gravely,

"You can smoke, Father Spikenard."

The Flirt.

This brilliant insect of the butterfly species is common to all latitudes, but flourishes best in warm climate. It revels in the atmosphere of the ball room, the matinee, the artistic re union; and while it loves publicity, it is not loth to lurk in shaded alcoves or to nestle among cushions in quiet corners. The plumage of the female Flirt is very dazzling. It is clad in the most radiant smiles and compliments of the softest and most delicate shades, while its eyes have a strange, deep and penetrating lustre. It diffuses a faint yet thrilling perfume, caught from crushed flowers, scent bags and billet doux. Its music is a low, persuasive hum. It can be true to no tune, but sings snatches, and at the piano runs over the keys with a light and tremulous touch. The volatility of this insect has long perplexed naturalists. It baffles pursuit. Strange to say, it dissolves to the touch, and when caught is a handful of ashes, cold and colorless. The sting of the Flirt is very severe. Some say it is poisonous. Instances have been known where it has proved fatal to happiness and hope. It is inflected with perfect impartiality, but seems to strike deepest into fresh and honest hears. The Flirt languishes at the first chill breath of sorrow. When storm is in the air it is pitiful to see it seeking shelter, its gay plumage so beaten and soiled, and the color and the perfume gone, and the low inviting music changed to a despairing plaint. The flame that it flutters around generally burns it at last, as is the case with many a poor moth.—*Vanity Fair.*

☞Carlyle says:—Nine tenths of the miseries and vices of manhood proceed from idleness; with men of quick minds, to whom it is especially pernicious, this habit is commonly the fruit of many disappointments and schemes oft baffled· and men fail in their schemes not so much from want of strength as from ill direction of it. The weakest living creature, by concentrating his powers upon a single object, can accomplish something; the strongest, by dispersing his over many, may fail to accomplish anything. The drop, by continual falling bores its passage through the hardest rock—the hasty torrent rushes over it with hideous uproar, and leaves no trace behind.

☞An eccentric friend stepped into a store which shall be nameless, where some "colored brethren" were doing a little trading. "Ah! Mr. ——," said our friend, "you have your cousins in, I see." The young merchant said nothing, but looked mad.—Our friend stepped out, but in a few minutes returned, after the sable customers had departed "I hope you won't take any offence at what I remarked just now," said he.

"Oh, no," said the merchant, "I never take offence at anything you say." "Glad of it," replied our quizzart, "the niggers are as mad as the d—l!" and then sloped, narrowly missing a flying yard stick.

☞A citizen of a neighboring town went to market one morning, and having purchased a turkey of a countryman gave him in payment a bank note. The countryman was doubtful of the genuineness of the bill, and ran across to old McC———'s store to submit it to his inspection.

Now McC—— was very near sighted, and so put the note close to his peepers. The examination was satisfactory; for, handing the note back, he pronounced it genuine.—The countryman's eyes grew big as saucers, and as he went out of the store he exclaimed: "Well, I'll be whipped if ever I saw a man tell a good note before *by smelling it!*"

Recent Lunar Discoveries.

It is only very recently that the capital notion so persistently maintained by certain astronomers, of the utterly lifeless waste of the moon's surface, has been exploded.—The way the idea got prevalence was in denying the existence of an atmosphere around the moon, a state of things that would of necessity exclude the existence of water and organic life from our satellite. This theory led to the further denial of heat in the lunar rays, from which flowed a multitude of errors.

But Knox and Melvin have proved by exact observations, that there is heat in moonshine, and Zantodeschi has measured it in its effects upon the mimosa, while an English scholar has demonstrated that the earth is colder in the first quarter of the moon than it is in the second. Again, moonshine exerts a wonderful influence on plants. Light enables them to absorb carbon from the carbonic acid gas of the atmosphere, and as this is their daily work, they sleep at night except when the moonlight wakes them up, and sets them to work again. So the farmer is right who sows the seed just before the full of the moon, for the plants come up about the time of the new moon and pass their infancy under the dark nights, but when the full moon comes its light sets them to work, and thus the process of growing is continued night and day, while a contrary course is injurious to the tender plant which requires sleep.

The sailors say that the moon eats up the clouds, and Whewell and Quetelet have proved the truth of the observation, by showing that more rain falls in the dark moon than in its second and third quarters.

Webb has shown by a careful comparison of the present appearance of the moon's surface with that made by Maedler twenty years ago that it has undergone great changes. Several of the minor craters have assumed different shapes. These changes indicate the existence of air and water.—Scochi has demonstrated that the peaks of the highest mountains of the moon are covered with snow. De la Rive has discovered that what used to be regarded as barren plains, are extensive forests. Schwabe, the discoverer of the periodic times of the sun's spots, sustains the discovery of De la Rive's. After a careful examination, he found furrows to consist of trees, leafless at one season, and in full foliage at another, for the changes in their appearance are periodic.—Hence another proof of atmosphere and water and all the phenomena incident to the existence of the elements.

The photography of the moon's surface, now going on in the American and European observatories, and the special attention paid to the study of the lunar surface by some of the most distinguished astronomers of the day, cannot fail to result in more wonderful discoveries than these which we just noticed. We have no doubt, the mass of matter of which the moon is made will be found to be of the same character as that of the earth, and subject to similar laws of existence, and that the surface will be found to be capable of sustaining organic life.—*Baltimore Patriot.*

Study Elegance of Expression.

Among other rules which a father submitted to his son for his guidance through life was that which heads this article. Unfortunately few of us take the trouble to express ourselves in well constructed sentences, and yet it is quite as easy to use correct words, when we desire to give form to our emotions. How often do we hear persons, who cannot plead ignorance as an excuse for their derelictions declare, when they are fatigued, that they are "tired to death." This expression—which is meant to be forcible—is not only vulgar but impotent, inasmuch as it does not convey what the utterer intends. How often do ladies declare with uplifted hands that they are "frighted to death;" or when their shoes are large for their feet, "they are a mile too long;" or their hats are "a world too long."

We might fill a column with the inelegant phrases which are heard in all classes of society. It is a pity that the English tongue should thus be prostituted. Were it a language from which it would be difficult to cull words to express our feelings or convey our ideas, there would be some excuse for what we might denounce as "unlicensed vulgarity," but as it is exceedingly copious—full of beautiful words conveyed from a thousand foundations to the "well of English undefiled,"—there is little or no excuse for much of the cant that passes current in society.

In the palmy days of Greece, not even the women who sold fruit and fish in the streets of Athens could be induced to express their thoughts in vulgar forms of speech. Indeed, these women were said to be celebrated for the purity of their diction; and more than once were they appointed umpires to decide between learned men upon the grammatical accuracy of sentences. We would not have speakers of English so pedantic or so exact, but we would have them accustom themselves to the use of words that would convey to the ear what they really felt or desired, not indulging in pleonasms that grate as harshly on the uneducated as the educated ear. In our intercourse with each other, we should study elegance of expression.

☞Oft what seems a trifle, a mere nothing by itself, in some nice situations, turns the scales of fate, and rules the most important actions.

From the Mobile (Ala.) Tribune.

Mysterious Music.

The mystic music sometimes heard at the mouth of the Pascagoula river, on a still night, is one of the wonders of our coast. It is not confined, however, to the Pascagoula river, but has often been heard at other places. At the mouth of Rayos Coq d'Inde and other inlets opening into the Gulf along the coast of our country the curious listener, lying idly in his boat, with lifted oars, when every other sound is hushed, may sometimes hear its strains coming apparently from beneath the water, like the soft notes of distant Æolian harps.

This phenomenon, as we all know, has been a fruitless source of legend, romance and poetry. The traditions that have been related, in explanation of it, vary considerably from each other. One account is a story of individual love and sorrow, and attributes the "mysterious music" to an Indian maiden who once plunged into the sea in grief for the loss of her lover. Another gives an account of a bloody battle between two tribes and the final extinction of the few survivors by driving them into the water—the plaintive wail of their lingering spirits keeping up a perpetual memorial of the tragical event. Yet another version is that given by M. Cayarre, of the old Christian missionary and the revenge of the mermaid.

We have always supposed that this phenomenon, whatever its origin might be, natural or supernatural, was peculiar to our own coast. It appears, however, from an extract given by some of the English papers from Sir Emerson Tennent's recent work on Ceylon that something very like it is known at Battialloa, in that island, and is attributed to a less poetical and mysterious origin—that is, to a peculiar species of shell fish. They are said to be heard at night, and most distinctly when the moon is nearest the full, and are described in terms that correspond very close with the accounts given of the Pascagoula music by those who have heard it. But according to the same authority, it is only in Ceylon that this submarine music is heard. Sir Emerson says:

Sounds somewhat similar are heard under water at some places on the western coast of India, especially in the harbor of Bombay. At Caldera, in Chili, musical cadences are said to issue from the sea near the landing place; they are described as rising and falling fully four notes, resembling the tones of harp strings, and mingling like those at Battialloa, till they produce a musical discord of great delicacy and sweetness. The animals from which they proceed have not been identified at either place, and the mystery remains unsolved, whether those at Battialloa are given forth by fishes or mullusks.

The Bad Manners of Representatives Accounted for

A writer in the New York *Tribune* says:

The amenities of good manners have not of late years been largely practiced in this hot atmosphere of political turmoil and disagreement, but, so far as the House of Representatives is concerned, it may be doubted whether something of the more recent disorder in the blood of members may not be attributed to the character of the place in which they pass their time. A man must be of a very unsusceptible temperament, or have his passions under remarkable control, who can sit all day in that Chamber, drinking in at his eyes all those flaming colors, all that maddening mixture of struggling rays of yellow and red, and blue and green, and gold, his brain oppressed with that superincumbent mass of stucco, with all its wild disorder of ornament, on one side the presiding officer who so often demands his attention, veiled to his aching eyes in a blaze of reflected golden light, the reporters watching him from above with faces illuminated with ... grace, strangers looking down upon him from the depths obscure of that red, and wilderness of seats—a darkness made visible by the yellow walls beyond—a man must have more than ordinary self control if he can rest quietly, day after day, and week after week, with such material influences about him, and not, like Sue's butcher, "see red" and long for slaughter. The Indian warrior bedaubs himself with horrid hues not only that he may be frightful to his enemy, but as a constant irritant to his own passions. We convene our legislators as it were, in the tent, streaked, from floor to roof, with war paint, and members in a red light glare at members in yellow, or members in green, or members more unhappy still, in an incongruous mixture of many hues, and all are put beyond the possibility of sober and quiet behavior. Animals otherwise peaceful are goaded to madness in the arena by their tormentors under the enraging influence of color. More rational man is not exempt from like influences, and it is hardly just to hold the House responsible for the conduct of some of its members while breathing in this intoxicated atmosphere of bewildering pigments.

☞"Boy, who do you belong to?" asked a gentleman, as he stepped on board of a steamer, of a darkey leaning on the guards.

"I did belong to Massa Williams, sir, when I came aboard; but he is in the cabin playing poker wid de captain, and I *don't know who I belong to now!*"

☞It is a current belief that a wolf is never more dangerous than when he feels *sheepish.*

☞Railroads annihilate space and time, to say nothing of a multitude of passengers.